

SANDNet Weekly Update, June 19, 2000

Recommended Citation

SANDNet, "SANDNet Weekly Update, June 19, 2000", SANDNet, June 19, 2000,
<https://nautilus.org/sandnet/sandnet-weekly-update-june-19-2000/>

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Nuclear Issues

1. Pakistani Nuclear Supremacy

US Marine Corp General Anthony Zinni, chief of the US Central Command, reported that US military and intelligence officials have reassessed Pakistan's military capabilities and believe it has as many nuclear weapons as India, and is more capable of delivering nuclear weapons. The number of India's nuclear weapons may have been overstated in estimating their arsenal at 25 to 100, while Pakistan may have close to 30 weapons developed with the aid of the PRC and North Korea.

Pakistan's Ambassador to the US Maleeha Lodhi said that speculative reports by the US regarding Pakistan's nuclear supremacy over India will only encourage an Indian arms buildup and "are a recipe for a nuclear and conventional arms race in South Asia." Official US government spokespeople remained non-committal on the issue but emphasized restraint in nuclear weapons and their development, and urged a return to dialogue between Pakistan and India. An editorial in the Times of India stated that the US NMD plan is in response to a Pakistan-PRC-DPRK axis rather than against other rogue states, a tactic that serves to prevent advances in the Sino-Indian relationship and in Indian attempts at consensus over the CTBT.

2. Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty

Indian Defence Minister George Fernandez said that it would only be a matter of time until India signed the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), while a Pakistan Foreign Office spokesman said that Pakistan already observed a unilateral moratorium on nuclear testing but that it would wait for a national consensus on the issue before signing the CTBT. An editorial by former Foreign Secretary of India Jagat S. Mehta said that India has yet to identify a national consensus on the CTBT, but India should return to a balanced defense postures with a vigorous diplomacy on nuclear disarmament. An article by Praful Bidwai said that the India-Pakistan relationship has historically been one replete with uncertainty, distrust, and miscalculation, which threatens to result in a Hiroshima on a larger scale if India and Pakistan do not freeze their programs.

The Final Document of the 2000 Review Conference of the Nuclear Non- Proliferation Treaty (NPT) was prepared on May 20, and reflected compromise by both the Nuclear Weapons States (NWSs) and the Non-Nuclear Weapons States (NNWSs). There appeared to be progress, though non-binding, on disarmament by the 5 NWSs. The conference agreed NWSs should make unilateral efforts to reduce their arsenals, make them less operational, reduce their role in security policy planning, and increase the transparency of their programs.

India

1. Overview

Union Home Minister L.K. Advani ruled out sabotage in the death of Congress Party leader Rajesh Pilot.

2. CSCAP

India was admitted to the Council for Security Cooperation in Asia Pacific (CSCAP), a forum for discussing regional security concerns that pre-dates the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF). India's committee at CSCAP will be headed by A. N. Ram, a former secretary in the Ministry of External Affairs. Participation allows India to shape discussion before issues arrive at ARF or APEC, which are also Track II forums.

3. Pakistan's Intelligence Service

While not charging Bangladesh with complicity, Indian High Commissioner Deb Mukherji said that insurgent groups in the northeastern states have been receiving illegal arms supplies through Bangladesh, but did not rule out the possibility that these groups received support from Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI). India expressed concern to Nepal that it was allowing its territory to be used by the ISI. Nepal said that an Indian report which claimed that several Nepalese politicians and businessmen were supported by the ISI was unsubstantiated and "published with malicious intent." Dr. Imran Farooq claimed that the ISI and Military Intelligence smuggled in weapons to kill Muttahida Quami Movement workers and office-bearers in Karachi. The Vishwa Hindu Parishad warned that the growth of the ISI network could lead to another division of India.

4. Foreign Relations

Union Home Minister L.K Advani will visit Israel, France and Britain, and the Israeli portion of his trip will focus on technology and tactics of surveillance, border management, and counter-terrorism. In France he will visit Interpol, and in Britain he will visit Scotland Yard.

Former US President Jimmy Carter said that it was important that the US recognize India as a regional power. While the US should not upset the Pakistan-India balance by forging a strategic alliance with India, the US should pursue a stronger relationship. The US and India will study Indian poppy production to limit illegal opium while ensuring a stable medical supply.

Vice President Krishan Kant will visit Bulgaria June 8-21 and then visit Egypt. Meanwhile, two Mig-21 jet fighter canopies bound for India were seized by Bulgarian customs as the trader lacked a permit to traffic in military products.

Russia and India celebrated 100 years of consular relations between the two countries. However, in signing a memorandum of understanding with the US to set up a joint center for data exchange on missile launches, Russia has put created tension with India and the PRC, which are Russia's strategic partners.

British Foreign Secretary Robin Cook said that each region should decide which country should represent it in an enlarged UN Security Council. Cook also expressed reservations about Indian human rights violations in Kashmir.

Citing Iraqi support for India in the 1970s and 80s, Iraqi Ambassador to India Salah Al-Mukhtar criticized India for not providing enough political support to Iraq.

5. Military Hardware

Defence Minister George Fernandes may finalize the purchase of the British Hawk advanced jet trainer and the Russian aircraft carrier Admiral Gorshkov, demonstrating that India is holding strategic dialogue with both nuclear powers. The UK has also offered technical and design assistance to India in building its first aircraft carrier.

Pakistan

1. Overview

A meeting was proposed between Pakistan President Mohammad Rafiq Tarar and a close aid of ousted Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif for the first time since the military coup. Sharif said his goal is to revive democracy. A Shia leader described the law and order situation in Pakistan as fragile, adding that the nation appeared to be heading to civil war.

2. Terrorism

The US Congressional National Commission on Terrorism accused Pakistan of aiding terrorists, but the US State Department said that it would continue to work with Pakistan to crack down on terrorist groups and that it was not considering sanctions at this time. Pakistan has outlined a campaign to curb growing militant groups. The Hindu argued that the organic ties between Pakistani intelligence agencies and extremist groups in Kashmir are a major barrier to proceeding against terrorist groups.

3. Foreign Relations: Japan

Pakistan National Security Council member Shafi Niaz urged Japan to lift sanctions against Pakistan, but Japanese Foreign minister Yohei Kono repeated Japan's demand that Pakistan first sign the CTBT.

Kashmir

1. Overview

C. Raja Mohan suggests that India should take advantage of two trans- regional proposals to develop ties with the Middle East and China: a natural gas pipeline connecting India and the Middle East through Pakistan and commercial links with the PRC's Yunnan province. The pipeline, which Pakistan has agreed to, would develop ties between Pakistan and India.

The Muslim Al-Fateh Force warned the Kashmir government to discontinue work on the census project because non-Kashmiri people are being counted and there is no effort to include the many Kashmiri people who have been displaced.

2. US Role

Jane's Intelligence Digest reported that the US is sponsoring secret diplomacy to bring Kashmiri insurgents, India, and Pakistan to talks. US State Department spokesman Phillip Reeker said that the US has called for restraint in Kashmir, but is not attempting to mediate in the Kashmir dispute. US Vice President Al Gore sees no current mediation role for the US as long as such a role is not desired by both Pakistan and India.

Pakistan said that it was unaware of any US move to mediate, and reiterated its desire for a UN-sponsored settlement in Kashmir. India reiterated that it rejects third-party mediation in the dispute.

Pakistan's leader Pervez Musharraf urged India to enter talks, and said, "there has to be reciprocity

of response on both sides." He said India has put many conditions on talks. US Assistant Secretary of State for South Asia Karl Inderfurth asked India to resume dialogue with Pakistan. A Dawn editorial said that the situation may need US active participation in the dispute, not merely advice.

3. Solutions

Himal suggested that one possible solution to the Kashmir dispute is to follow the Andorra model, in which both India and Pakistan agree upon the Line of Control as the international boundary and jointly guarantee the 'independence' of the Kashmir Valley.

Another solution suggested is full implementation of Article 370 of the Indian Constitution, which would also be a model for other problems in South Asia.

Sri Lanka

1. Colombo Assassination

A suicide bomber killed Sri Lanka Minister of Industrial Development C. V. Gooneratne and 21 others in the Ratmalana suburb of Colombo. It is believed that the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) Black Tigers unit is responsible for the attack, but there has been no confirmation. The US, which supports Sri Lankan territorial integrity, condemned the attack. The bombing will delay any peace talks with the LTTE. More than 60 people were detained for questioning by police.

An editorial published in the Hindu said that the newest bombing shows the LTTE is uninterested in peace or negotiations, is trying to take the heat off of Jaffna, and may be hoping to provoke a backlash against Tamils that can be pointed to as Sri Lankan government attacks against Tamils. The LTTE may be throwing away opportunities for political settlements.

Sri Lankan President Chandrika Kumaratunga held talks with Opposition leader Ranil Wickremesinghe on a power-sharing plan.

2. Links to Indian Extremists

The Indian Home Ministry is probing whether there are any links between the LTTE and Indian extremist groups like the Peoples War Group, the Naxalites, and others.

3. Indian Diplomacy

Indian External Affairs Minister Jaswant Singh will visit Sri Lanka to reiterate India's commitment to Sri Lankan integrity and to meet with moderate Tamil parties regarding their views of the situation. Many are hopeful this symbolizes that India is taking a more active role in finding a solution. After concluding his visit, he was hopeful that hostilities could be brought to an end. India wants the LTTE to participate in talks with the Sri Lankan government. India will not become militarily involved in Sri Lanka but will extend US\$100 million in credit to help financial shortfalls.

The ex-militant Eelam People's Democratic Party, the People's Liberation Organisation of Tamils, the Tamil Eelam Liberation Organisation, and the Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Organisation are upset that only the non-militant Tamil United Liberation Front will receive a private meeting with Indian External Affairs Minister Jaswant Singh, and some may not attend their scheduled group meeting. At the meeting, the Tamil parties encouraged India to press the Sri Lankan government for

an immediate ceasefire to ease the suffering of trapped civilians.

4. Foreign Diplomacy

A three-person team from Norway came to offer its assistance in resolving the conflict, led by special envoy Erik Solheim. Norway will attempt to facilitate negotiations between the government and LTTE.

Thailand said that it would not permit its territory to be used for staging LTTE operations, after a LTTE half-built mini-submarine was found on the Thai coast.

5. War Fighting

The Sri Lankan government looked for the means to pay for expensive hardware needed to fight the LTTE, raising taxes on water, electricity, gasoline, cigarettes, and alcohol, and reducing subsidies on cooking fuel.

Forty-six Tamil refugees from Sri Lanka Tamil have arrived in Tamil Nadu. A total of 345 refugees have arrived since the outbreak of ethnic violence in Sri Lanka. A story in the Hindu reported the unofficial Indian policy as being to block refugees but to help them once they are in India; the Mandapam refugee camp with 3,900 refugees can accommodate another 3,000. Refugees are only trickling in, and mostly from areas under occupation of the Sri Lankan military.

The LTTE has asked for a ceasefire to allow thousands of trapped civilians to escape fighting areas.

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